

Story 1317 (1988 Tape 8)

Narrator: Hikmet Aksoy,  
managing editor of  
Kuzey Haber, a  
Trabzon newspaper

Location: Trabzon, capital city  
of Trabzon Province

Date: October

A Laz<sup>1</sup> as Witness in Court

Cemal, a resident of the Black Sea coast near Trabzon, was once called to the local <sup>of her</sup> court to be a witness. In order to identify this witness, the judge asked him a number of questions about himself and his family. "Where were you born?"

"At Rize."

"When were you born?"

"Thirty years ago."

"What was your father's name."

"His name was such and such."

"What was your mother's name before she was married?"

Puzzled about what such a question might have to do with his being called to the court, Cemal asked, "Are you asking about my mother's girlhood name?"

<sup>1</sup>The Laz people constitute one of the larger ethnic minorities in Turkey. Their exact origins are not definitely known. The largest concentrations of Lazes are in extreme northeastern Turkey along the Black Sea coast. Reputedly stupid, they are made fun of in numerous folk anecdotes about fools. The frequent success of Lazes who move to Istanbul belies the folk image.

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Annoyed by this question, the judge answered, "No--mine!"

"Please, sir, tell me how I am supposed to know anything at all about your mother?"